



Post-Crescent photo by Bob Baeten

**MYRON JACKSON** shows Edison School youngsters Andy Palmer and Nathan Miller how a ham radio works.

# Tuned in: Hams ears of globe

**By Jim Flasch**

Post-Crescent staff writer

The world becomes a melting pot for students at Madison Junior High classes when Myron Jackson turns on the amateur (ham) radio and tunes in the globe.

Jackson, a science teacher at Madison, is using his amateur radio to talk to the world as part of Global Awareness week at the school.

It is one thing to study the cultures and quite another to actually get to talk to people who live them.

The focus of the school's project, which has been going on for the last week, is global awareness. "We're trying to become familiar with other areas of the world," Jackson said during an interview.

"The contribution we've been trying to make is with our amateur radio station," he said.

It is not the first time the radio set has been used for such a project, however, as Jackson has had it set up in his science room for the past two years as a hands-on teaching aid.

"We're trying to get in contact with as many different countries as we're able to," he said. "We have a number of atlases out, and we look for the countries of the people we're talking with. In most instances, we are able to find the cities where they're located."

The radio bands have been searched for station operators throughout the European continent, and the students have chalked up an impressive list of contacts so far.

They've talked to operators in Russia, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, along with Poland the Ukraine, France and Spain, according to Jackson.

Contact with the Russian and Baltic States has been especially important because of the upheaval now being experienced there and the threat that their independence could soon be repealed.

Jackson said students keep track of the names of the radio operators who they contact and then send them cards, called QSL cards, with their names, address, and information about the Appleton area. It is a tradition among ham operators to make that postal contact following radio contact, and Jackson said they of-

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ten get QSL cards in return.

"They've really become more aware of the countries around the world because of it," he said.

While they have the ability to reach South American countries, they haven't made many contacts in that part of the world yet, he said, but that will likely come later on in the course.

While the single side band radio is designed for transmitting and receiving, students can also dial in to hear radio broadcasts from a wide range of commercial stations throughout the world. They've been doing this in their spare time and in class to listen to the different perspectives being broadcast on the war in the Persian Gulf.

Students have listened to the BBC, (British Broadcasting Corp.), the Voice of America (VOA), the Voice of Canada, and some foreign

language broadcasts that they're not sure where they're from, but could be from the Middle East. Radio Baghdad aims a broadcast at the United States around 3 p.m. every afternoon, but so far the class has not heard the English language broadcast coming from the capital of Iraq.

"The Canadian stations have a slightly different perspective than what we normally hear, but the VOA broadcasts are very similar to what we hear on the domestic stations," Jackson said.

Students, according to Jackson, are simply "fascinated" by the radio contacts and listening to short wave. Besides the special Global Awareness week, Jackson teaches amateur radio at the school and has night classes open to the public for those who want to become licensed amateur radio operators.

"This year, we just had one class in the fall, but in the last year and a half, we've licensed 18 new ham operators," Jackson said.